The Necessity of Global Citizenship Education in the EFL Classroom

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The role of EFL education for learners depends greatly on the varying social, political, historic, and economic contexts where the education takes place. In many of these environments however, the learning goals of EFL education focus on the acquisition of language skills following idealized 'native' speaker norms. This focus on skills development from a deficit model often masks the implicit effect that an EFL education has on learner identity and on relationships within local and global communities. Therefore, there needs to be a clear conception of what EFL learning goals represent in their larger social contexts and to promote learning goals that can dually improve the language ability of learners while also promoting healthy social cohesion on a local and international level. Global Citizenship Education (GCE), as it is conceptualized by many international education foundations, seeks to emphasize mutual respect, inclusive societies, and peaceful coexistence for all peoples and can therefore provide a set of learning goals that EFL education can adopt for their learners (UNESCO, 2014). This paper seeks to understand how the ways in which the conceptualizations of EFL have been created in particular historical contexts can affect the individual learner's relation to the global society at large and how these different conceptualizations operate from a deficit model for EFL learners. Then, the paper explores how GCE provides a holistic view of peace, prosperity, and progress for individuals and groups that is necessary to develop societies and nations into ones that are just and equitable for all, and how these learning goals can be conceptualized within an EFL education.

EFL as Cultural Capital

As the British and American colonial empires spread their influence around the globe, EFL began its first iterations in classrooms around the world and an initial

conceptualization of EFL learning goals was formed (Pennycook, 1998). In this particular historical context, the international mobility of those learning English as a foreign language was low, and successful EFL learners were granted access to the local political and economic elite who dealt with governing the colony under the supervision of the colonial power (Canagarajah, 1999). The colonial relationship put the local population into a subservient role in governing and therefore, in order to participate with the elite social groups which aided the colonial powers, ability in English was a foremost priority (Pennycook, 1998). This learning goal placed English as a form of cultural capital, which allowed for successful learners to gain access to economic, political, and cultural status in their local community. Similarly, a more benign conceptualization of EFL learning as cultural capital exists in the modern neo-liberal globalized economic system. While colonial powers enforced their rule often through threats or use of violence, the modern system is more coercive in its approach (Fanon, 1963). Those who seek to become part of a now global economic elite, again a population that is dominated by the Anglosphere and its adherents, must first gain ability in English to fully participate in this system. English is the clear international lingua franca, and while this allows for ease of communication, it also privileges those whose first language is English (Fairclough, 2006). This paradigm is often labeled as 'linguistic imperialism' in which the economic power of the Anglosphere creates an imperative for those wishing to become members of the economic elite to follow the norms set by that Anglosphere, including the language of communication (Phillipson, 1992). The learning goals that arise in EFL education under these conditions typically are measured by the degree to which the colonized class can adhere to the norms of the colonizers. These linguistic norms include variations of pronunciation, grammatical structure, syntax, lexicon, and register that align with their colonizers, who were typically white, male, and upper class. As well, pragmatic and cultural norms must be learned and adopted in order to be full participants in the system controlled by colonial powers. While these linguistic norms and cultural practices can be isolated and seen as benign units of knowledge to be gained by a learner through an EFL education, they have much larger impacts on the learners' conceptions of power and relationships with local and global communities. While the nature of the colonial relationship has changed, the norms to which EFL learners are expected to conform to remain the same, as access

to economic and political power is predicated on their ability to participate in the institutions and industries dominated by English and the Anglosphere.

The cultural capital paradigm implicitly maintains that the English language and Anglosphere culture to be superior to that of other local populations. Historically, this was often based on a religious or biological hierarchy which placed Europeans and their culture above those peoples who were colonized. In the most perverse interpretations of this paradigm, assumptions are made about the inherent ability of English speakers to dominate the fields of economics and politics through the 'natural' power of the language and culture itself (Fairclough, 2001). This embedded superiority complex was much more explicit and overt during the era of military imperialism and colonization, but persists in the globalization of neoliberal economies. An EFL education is usually reserved for the local economic elites, and successful learning goals allowed for participation in local and global structures of power, which coincide with colonial power of the Anglosphere. However, this paradigm puts the non-Anglosphere EFL learner in a position of perpetual subservience and deficit, as while they can try their best to adopt the language and culture of the colonizer, racial and ethnic bigotry permanently label these learners as outsiders (Memmi, 1965). The learner is always adhering to norms that they cannot control, and assessment is based on how well they are able to adapt to these norms. In the cultural capital paradigm, EFL learners cannot become full members of the Anglosphere themselves, but rather access the resources that have been consolidated by Anglosphere actors. Therefore, the system forms a vicious cycle in which Anglosphere linguistic and cultural norms come to dominate economic, political, and cultural fields, and are thought of as a product of natural selection for their implicit capacity to drive these areas rather than as a product of colonization and imperialism. Clearly, the cultural capital paradigm is unhealthy for learners as it puts them in a perpetual field of deficit, where they will always be measured not for their own contributions, but rather for their ability to adhere to outside norms (Norton, 2013). However, as the historical context of learning changed, similar issues also arose to face EFL learners.

Acculturation in ESL

As the international mobility of peoples has increased, the role of learning English as a Second Language (ESL) has become more pronounced. The Anglosphere countries that colonized every populated continent for over a century are now accepting peoples from these various places in their own nation, with inevitable variances in language and culture as a result. In the paradigm of acculturation, an immigrant ESL learner studies the linguistic and cultural differences that exist between themselves and the speakers in the 'target' language and culture in order to become an accepted member of the 'target' group (Schumann, 1986). While the 'target' euphemism is used in this paradigm, it is a mask for the same Anglosphere linguistic and cultural norms that exist in the cultural capital paradigm. In this way, similar to the paradigm of cultural capital, the linguistic and cultural norms of Anglosphere societies become the ESL learning goal and a successful learning outcome is adhesion to these norms (Phillipson, 1992). However, differing from the cultural capital model, EFL learners in the acculturation model are trying to adapt to a new environment, and success is measured in their ability to live well day to day, regardless of their access to economic and political power. The acculturation paradigm often ignores the multilingual and multicultural nature of society within the Anglosphere and instead promotes the perceived 'native' speaker as the ideal model, which commonly favors a similar straight, white, cis male, upper-middle class stereotype (Kubota, 2009). As a result, ESL learners are expected to adopt or adapt to the language and culture of an idealized but fictional 'native' speaker. For example, learners are asked to develop pronunciation norms, grammatical structures, register, and vocabulary use which are falsely claimed to be the standard of English within a certain region or country, but are a product of a reductionist view of language use based on race, gender, class, and ability (Fang, 2018). Learners are thus asked not only to learn a language but also adhere to a false standard of what is 'acceptable' or 'normal' within the society which they are living in, limiting the learners' ability to retain their own culture and identity within that society (Norton, 2013).

The acculturation paradigm does not maintain that Anglosphere language or culture are implicitly superior, as is maintained in the cultural capital paradigm, but instead argues that adherence to Anglosphere linguistic and culture norms is an

unquestioned basis for life within a particular country. In this way, the stakes for the individual learner are high in the acculturation model as the inability to meet learning goals can mean social isolation and ostracization within their local community. The acculturation paradigm suffers from the same issues as the cultural capital paradigm in that it asks EFL learners to make adjustments to their own identity in order to become a member of a 'target' culture and is criticized for the implicit denigration of the learner's identity as undesirable, and the promotion of powerful social classes and norms as ideal. The 'native' speaker model of language learning promotes a false sense of what is natural in society, which implicitly displaces the languages and cultures of minority groups inside the country, whether they be immigrants or those belonging to other minoritized groups. Similar to the cultural capital paradigm, acculturation has learners framed in a deficit model, as they try to meet learning goals that will allow them to participate in society as long as they adhere to linguistic and cultural norms dictated to them by the powerful groups within the country.

Intercultural Communication in EFL

As discussed previously, English is the international lingua franca in many different global fields and industries and thus is increasingly used between parties where no interlocutor fits the traditional model of a 'native' speaker (Jenkins, 2006). The intercultural communication paradigm of EFL learning has developed the idea in which speakers from a variety of linguistic and cultural backgrounds successfully use English to communicate (Baker, 2011). Intercultural Communication progresses the conceptualization of EFL outcomes as it seeks to train learners to successfully navigate instances of divergence in discourse that arise due to differences in the background culture of the interlocutors who both are competent English speakers (Scollon, 2012). This can be distinguished from the cultural capital paradigm and acculturation paradigm in that the expectations of successful communication do not hinge upon adherence to a 'native' speaker model. This progress allows for a wider variation of Englishes as accepted forms of proper use, which thus allows for a wider variety of acceptable users who might have large differences in linguistic norms. This has a profound impact on varieties of pronunciation, grammatical structure, vocabulary and register that are permitted as appropriate for communication. As well, both interlocutors are tasked with navigating issues with miscommunication, and the onus of successful communication is not solely placed upon the EFL learner.

All of these points are an advance in the ways in which the learning goals of EFL education are conceptualized, meaning that EFL learners are now seeking to communicate successfully in more equitable exchanges as goals of their learning, rather than trying to adhere to false 'native' speaker norms. Local varieties of English, as well as L1 influence upon language production are accepted and made part of the core learning of the Intercultural Communication paradigm.

However, while the Intercultural Communication paradigm allows for a wider variety of communication and communicators as an accepted outcome and learning goal, it stops short of exploring the ways in which identity and power relationships influence these communicative instances. As well, Intercultural Communication methodology often places interlocutors into national groups, which become hegemonic, homogenous categories that arbitrarily group together an otherwise varied assortment of peoples that are not explored in further depth. In order to conceptualize and study the different instances in which miscommunication can occur, national identifiers are used to group types of speakers together and nationality becomes the overarching way that learners are identifiable and framed (Pennycook, 2017). The term 'background culture' often becomes synonymous with the idea of nationality in the intercultural EFL classroom, and this oversimplification of national groups can lead to 'essentialization', whereby learners consider diverse groups as having a single cultural background (Kubota, 2004). The aggressive, direct American speaker and the socially subservient, indirect Japanese speaker are stereotypes that are pervasive in this EFL paradigm. Furthermore, the contexts which produced the aggressive American and subservient Japanese stereotypes are left unexplored. In an Intercultural Communication paradigm, EFL learners are often perceived to be first belonging to a particular national background. As opposed to the homogenized 'target' language and culture of acculturation, EFL learners themselves can become an essentialized group within an intercultural communication paradigm (Kumaravadivelu, 2008). When national identities are not deeply explored relative to other variables, such as class, gender, race, sexual orientation, etc., cultural awareness and the ability to develop social inclusivity will not be complete. Therefore, the learning goals within an intercultural communication paradigm focus solely on the learner's ability to communicate successfully in a variety of contexts and with a variety of speakers. While this can be seen as an

improvement over the cultural capital and acculturation paradigms, it does not make any explicit effort to impact the learner's ability to participate in a global community equitably and with goals of peace and prosperity. In order to move beyond purely linguistic goals for EFL learners, and to adopt equitable and peaceful goals as a necessary part of an EFL education, a new paradigm should be adopted and implemented in the EFL classroom.

Global Citizenship in EFL

Global Citizenship Education differs from the previous paradigms significantly. Instead of asking learners to adopt cultural practices, or have learners navigate discourse issues that arise from falsely portrayed national stereotypes, GCE is reflective in nature and has learners better understand the global diversity of culture and language and learn how to relativize the development of their own identity and group membership as well as that of others within these diverse groupings (UNESCO, 2014). To adapt to a GCE paradigm, EFL education should promote the idea of complex identity formation and multiple cultural group memberships. People should not be identified and grouped solely by their nationality and linguistic background, but also through other impactful factors, such as race, gender, and class. The exploration of these factors will allow for EFL learners to accept themselves as individuals first, and also respect a diverse group of others as equals. EFL learners should reflect on their own culture and better relativize how the process of socialization has influenced their linguistic choices and cultural norms (UNESCO, 2015). Through this kind of exploration, learners can more easily utilize these negotiation skills when encountering cultural practices that are foreign to them. Instead of evaluating a cultural trait or linguistic habit as deficient, learners would identify these practices as different, and then further explore the ways in which these customs came about within that cultural group. As the global nature of English is increasingly become important, the ways in which EFL learners can handle ambiguity and novelty when interacting with peoples and groups for the first time is essential.

EFL education is uniquely suited for this kind of exploration as it is imbedded with the history of colonialism and imperialism which birthed the field. While the learning goals of equitable linguistic norms and cultural practices as conceptualized

within the intercultural communication framework should not be disposed of wholesale, they should be supplemented with a robust exploration of language and culture in context. Without a base-level study of language as a whole, EFL learners will not be able to realize how languages evolve and adapt over time, and cannot understand that the features of a language are not naturally occurring, but rather molded by use and context. As well, English should not be promoted as a naturally 'better' language to EFL learners, nor even as a language that is absolutely necessary for global communication, but rather as a product of the history which has made it the global lingua franca. EFL education should accept multiple types of English as an appropriate goal, not only among perceived national standards, but also among regional vernaculars and dialects, formal registers, and other linguistic variations. GCE calls for learners of all backgrounds to acknowledge the equal status of all languages and cultures, instead of promoting one as inherently better or more suited for economic success (UNESCO, 2015). The ways in which language and culture relate to the learning of a second language within a GCE paradigm demand that all language variations and cultural differences are accepted as equal partners in the global society. As well, and just as importantly, EFL education should promote equality between individuals and a broader sense of social justice. GCE 'recognizes the relevance of education in understanding and resolving global issues in their social, political, cultural, economic and environmental dimensions" (UNESCO, 2014, p. 9). In this way, it is in the purview of EFL education to address issues of human rights and social justice. While explicit teaching of human rights should not supersede linguistic targets, utilizing equitable dialogues and multilateral character interaction can foster egalitarian attitudes in learners. It is through this approach that EFL education can help foster humanitarian values and increase critical thinking in our learners through GCE.

Conclusion

If we are to accept that one of the goals of education is the promotion of a just, peaceful, and sustainable world as is promoted by GCE, the ways in which EFL education implicitly promotes these targets through their learning goals must be investigated. The EFL paradigms of cultural capital, acculturation, and intercultural communication fall short of these goals in several significant ways, usually as they humble the EFL learner as someone who needs to overcome a deficit. Therefore, the

adoption of GCE goals within EFL education requires the fundamental realignment of how language and culture are conceptualized, and the overhaul of what is considered appropriate for the EFL classroom. The true acceptance of social justice demands that language and culture is elevated beyond the nation-state, and multiple group memberships are explored and promoted equally. As well, if we are to accept the equality of all speakers, the linguistic features that are promoted as acceptable must be expanded to allow for all users of the language. GCE goes beyond language learning goals as a collection of knowledge or a set of skills, but rather promotes the idea of communication between peoples on equal footing, regardless of their cultural or linguistic background, with focus on promoting humanitarian values and social justice.

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